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ABSTRACT

These guidelines for development of local programs of work experience are the result of a workshop which incorporated input from professionals in the areas of counseling, vocational education, social work, school psychology, administration, organized labor, and state labor regulations. Content briefly covers the following areas of work experience program development: purpose, definition, objectives, administration, advisory committee, local school work experience plan, work experience coordinator, certification, student ratio to work experience coordinator, extended contract for work experience coordinators, travel allowance, transportation of students, facilities, maximum enrollment, written work agreements, employer responsibility, legal responsibility and restrictions, involvement of organized labor, academic credit, state aids, categorical aids, student eligibility, selecting job sites, rights of the student, applications for work experience, duration of the program, hours worked, wages, student-employer conflicts, parents role, student log of experiences, career development component of work experience program, evaluation, follow-up, and relationship of work experience to vocational co-op education programs. (SH)

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GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHMENT

OF

WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS

IN

WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOLS

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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1975

CENTER FOR STUDIES IN VOCATIONAL
AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

CE 015 121

Introduction

The guidelines for development of local programs of work experience which are presented herein are the result of an effort by approximately forty persons involved in a workshop to accomplish this task. The guidelines were developed in response to Chapter 332 of the Laws of Wisconsin 1973 which permits work training programs and authorizes the State Superintendent to approve such programs and pay regular state aids on students enrolled in these programs.

This guideline represents a reasonable beginning for development of work experience programs in Wisconsin's high schools. Additional clarification and refinement will come with experience and growth in the program.

Although the guidelines were developed with considerable input from representatives of the Department of Public Instruction, Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, USOE Regional Office, University of Wisconsin, Local High Schools, Local CESA's and Wisconsin Labor Organizations and included persons with expertise in counseling, vocational education, social work, school psychology, administration, organized labor and state labor regulations, final responsibility for the content rests with the editors. We hope our interpretation and organization of what was intended by the above participants in developing the guildelines represents a concensus of viewpoints when one was apparent and a compromise viewpoint when consensus was not readily available.

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The Guidelines contained here-in were prepared pursuant to a grant from the Bureau for Career and Manpower Development, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Points of view or opinions do not necessarily represent official Department of Public Instruction position or policy.

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PURPOSE

Work experience programs provide options for students who are unable to find another more relevant program within the school's offerings. Programs are preventive in that they encourage students to remain in school by providing relevant education; they are preparatory in that they provide employability skills through employer/employee relations and actual work experience which help the individual acquire a basis from which to choose a vocation, and they permit students to earn money, which is a necessity for many young people while in a supervised school program.

DEFINITION

Work experience programs are an alternative to the traditional school program. Students are allowed to earn academic credit while employed (paid or volunteer) in the community. The employment serves as a means of acquiring desirable work habits and attitudes toward the world of work and is not necessarily related to a student's career objectives. Students in the work experience programs are supervised by the school's work experience coordinator and an employer representative.

OBJECTIVES

Work experience programs are designed to provide students an opportunity to:

1. Foster positive attitudes about work, school and society.
2. Develop a realistic understanding of the relationship between education and the world of work.
3. Enhance a positive self-image.
4. Provide opportunities for successful experiences.
5. Promote understanding of the dignity inherent in all kinds of work.
6. Provide students with an opportunity to develop their potentialities through experiences in life-like situations and work experiences.
7. Develop students' capacity to better understand and function in an employer-employee relationship.
8. Earn wages which may provide the necessary support to remain in school and/or build a degree of independence in the student.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

At the local level, the work experience program must be administered through one office. It is recommended this office be that of the Local Vocational Education Coordinator (LVEC). If no LVEC serves a school, then another appropriate office such as that of principal or counselor should be selected. Work experience coordinators need not be LVEC's nor do LVEC's have to be the work experience coordinators. Of primary concern in locating the administrative function for the work experience program in the office of LVEC is the belief that one office must coordinate all out-of-school job experience programs and contacts with local businesses and industries. Because the LVEC office already supervises vocational Coop among other programs, it is logical to have additional out-of-school work programs administered in the same office. This will avoid duplication and misunderstanding with employers or potential employers and serve to coordinate all work programs.

The function of the administrative office for the work experience program is to supervise centrally all work experience coordinators, file all records pertinent to the program and provide assistance in implementing a work experience program.

THE WORK EXPERIENCE TEAM

At the local level, a team should be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the work experience program. The team should be composed of people in at least two of the following positions (may consist of all, depending on the local situation): administrators, counselors, school psychologists, social workers, LVEC's, teachers, (vocational and academic), work experience coordinators, and/or other appropriate school personnel as determined by the local plan. Individual roles of the work experience team members must merge into a team effort if the work experience program is to be of benefit to the student, the community and the school.

Primary functions of the team include: 1) planning the program, including development of the local plan; 2) implementing the program through referral of students, screening of applications and recommending work experience situations which will meet the student's need; 3) evaluating the student's progress and the program's progress; and 4) recommending changes in the local work experience plan.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

It is suggested that an advisory committee composed of appropriate persons from the community and students participating in the program be organized and utilized to provide community liaison and valuable feedback to the work experience team on the functioning of the work experience program.

LOCAL SCHOOL WORK EXPERIENCE PLAN

A local school needs to submit a plan for a work experience program to the Department of Public Instruction for review. If the school expects to receive State or Federal funding, the plan is mandatory. The plan, in addition to providing direction to staff and consistency with school and state regulations will: 1) meet the requirements under Chapter 332, which indicates that a school work training program that permits 16-18 year old students to be excused from school must meet the approval of the State Superintendent and 2) the plan will provide the basis for applying for outside funds if available from State, Federal or other sources. In approving plans, the Department of Public Instruction should give consideration to community resources and needs of students in any particular community.

The plan should include local characteristics, needs, staffing, administration, projected growth, regulations and guidelines for operation. The plan will vary from school to school; however, the following are among items that may be included in the plan:

1. Philosophy
2. Goals
3. Objectives
4. Amount of hours per week a student is permitted/required to work
5. Age requirements
6. Amount of credits a student may earn
7. Student eligibility
8. Conditions requiring work permits
9. Credit for early termination of job
10. Hazardous occupation employment policies

11. Policy on dropping classes to get into work experience
12. Policy on changing jobs
13. Parental permission
14. Related instruction
15. Required reports
16. Ratio of students to staff
17. Role of staff and administration
18. Transportation
19. Student rights and responsibilities
20. Administrative organization

The plan should be developed by the work experience team with the knowledge and involvement of appropriate school officials. It is suggested that students be involved in development of the plan.

WORK EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR

Any person meeting certification requirements may be a work experience coordinator. This person will be a member of the work experience team and may represent any one or more of the areas on the team. The coordinator's function is to carry out the work experience program as defined in the plan and administered by the office of LVEC or other administrative office (if no LVEC serves the school).

ROLE OF THE WORK EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR

The role of the work experience coordinator should be one of gathering general overall information concerning training possibilities in the community, selecting potential job sites and identifying, screening, placing and supervising students on the job. To assist in making these decisions, the work experience team should determine which places of employment are acceptable and which will meet the individual needs of particular students. In addition the team will assist the work experience coordinator in identifying and screening applicants for work experience programs. Supervision should be shared by the on-site employer and the work experience coordinator.

The work experience coordinator will work under the supervision of the office of LVEC or other office which is designated as the administrative unit of the program.

CERTIFICATION

A work experience coordinator is a certified individual who has met the requirements established by a certification committee through DPI. Any person, regardless of position, who meets the basic requirements for certification can be a work experience coordinator.

STUDENT RATIO TO WORK EXPERIENCE COORDINATORS

The coordinator of a work experience program should have a minimum of one-half hour of coordination time available per week for each student enrolled. Therefore, the number of students each coordinator can successfully supervise should be determined by the amount of time allowed to the coordinator. For example, if 30 students are enrolled, the coordinator should have 15 clock hours of coordination time per week. The one-half clock hour per week per student includes coordination and travel time.

EXTENDED CONTRACT FOR WORK EXPERIENCE COORDINATORS

Local school districts should provide the work experience coordinator with an extended contract of a minimum of 80 hours prior to the opening of school. This time is to be used for public relations, locating training stations, home visitations, writing of work experience agreements and readying the program to accept students when school begins.

TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

The work experience coordinator should be reimbursed by the school district for travel expense while administering the program. Local school districts should be eligible to receive general transportation aid for the coordinator and also for any transportation costs which a district may incur in transporting students to their places of employment.

TRANSPORTATION OF STUDENTS

Transportation should be the responsibility of the student in cooperation with the parents. However, no student should be deprived of work experience because of lack of transportation. Other provisions for transportation and possible sources of funding should be pursued and developed to provide this service if needed in special cases.

FACILITIES

A classroom should be made available to the work experience program for related individual and large group instruction. It can be used as a laboratory, study center and resource center. The classroom should be equipped with movable tables and chairs which can be arranged for large and small group discussion and instruction and study purposes. The classroom should have adequate space and storage area for AV equipment, AV media and supplies.

A combination office and conference room should be close to the classroom. Filing equipment, a telephone and appropriate office materials should be provided for the work experience coordinator for use in working with individual students and making contacts with employers. The classroom and office should be near the guidance area if possible.

MAXIMUM ENROLLMENT

The ceiling on work experience program enrollment at any one high school should be determined by the individual school upon consideration of total school enrollment, community size, availability of job sites, and teacher-pupil ratio. This determination should be stated in the school plan for work experience and be derived from input from the work experience team and other school officials.

WRITTEN WORK AGREEMENTS

There must be a formal agreement between employer, student, parent and the school defining the student's needs which should be met, types of experiences which will be provided to meet these needs and the employer's expectations of the student. This agreement should be prepared in writing on an individual

basis for each student. It can then be used to evaluate progress and as a basis for modification of future work experiences for that student.

EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITY

Work experience is an educational program; therefore, employers should be made fully aware of the responsibilities they assume in ensuring that the work experience program provides a training experience aimed at meeting the needs of the individual students.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY AND RESTRICTIONS

Schools, employers, students, parents and work experience coordinators have the legal responsibility for knowing and abiding by all applicable labor and education laws. Interpretation of these laws and other reference materials are available from the Equal Rights Division of the Wisconsin Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations.

Certain legal restrictions and other concerns which the work experience coordinator should take into account in the operation of the work experience program are:

1. Restrictions as set forth by the Federal, State and local guidelines for employment of minors;

2. Policies or regulations specifically defined by the local school district and community;

3. Concerns which are potentially morally, physically or psychologically detrimental to the student, school or community; and

4. Restrictions imposed by bargaining units as a result of established rules and regulations.

INVOLVEMENT OF ORGANIZED LABOR

It is suggested that the operation of a work experience program be in harmony with organized labor at the local level. Specifically, work experience program coordinators and administrators should:

1. Establish contact with representatives of organized labor to inform them of the program's goals, objectives and procedures;

2. Invite organized labor representatives to serve on the work experience advisory committee;

3. Seek support for the work experience program from labor officials; and

4. Avoid placement of students in job slots which will displace regular workers.

ACADEMIC CREDIT

Work experience students may receive academic credit for their participation in the program. Credit rates will be determined by the local school district, but will not exceed the credit/hour ratio provided students within the regular academic program.

1. It is recommended that work experience students attend regular school classes part of the day or week.

2. It is recommended that students involved in a specific work experience program be provided with the opportunity to participate in daily or weekly related instruction which includes discussions centering on concerns or topics associated with the work experience.

STATE AIDS

Students enrolled in approved work experience programs will be eligible for inclusion in the calculation for regular school aids.

CATEGORICAL AIDS

No new categorical aids are available for work experience programs at this time*; however, certain existing Federal programs such as vocational education may provide funds on a project basis for special programs.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Work experience programs should be directed toward a target group of students enrolled in Grades 11 and 12 and having attained the age of 16 years.

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*The recommendation to the State Superintendent by the study committee is that categorical aids for work experience be sought from State funds.

Upon application or referral to the program, students will be screened by the work experience team. The team will make a recommendation regarding the appropriateness of the program for the student.

Suggested characteristics of students eligible for participation in work experience include:

1. Students who exhibit exceptional educational needs;

2. Students who, despite staff efforts to assist their learning, continue to experience academic learning problems in the school setting;

3. Students who exhibit repeated truancy, motivational and/or disciplinary problems; and/or

4. Students who demonstrate a need to work in order to afford to continue their education.

SELECTING JOB SITES

Job sites should take into account the student's abilities, limitations, skills and expectations as well as expections of the employer. The process of securing the job site may be shared by the student and the work experience coordinator. The work experience program can be promoted through the advisory committee, Chamber of Commerce, labor organizations and other community agencies. Information concerning employment in the area and potential work experience opportunities for young people should be filed and readily available as needed.

Personal contacts with potential employers are necessary to explain the program and determine attitudes about hiring high school students. Written work experience agreements involving the employer, the school, the parent, and the student should be used and explained to the employer. The work experience coordinator will maintain liaison, through the office of LVEC, with other out of school work coordinators to ensure that other programs (i.e., co-op, etc.) are not jeopardized or compromised by over contact with the same employer.

RIGHTS OF THE STUDENT

Rights and responsibilities of students in work experience programs are defined as follows:

1. The student shall be fully informed as to objectives of the program and how the program could affect his/her future;

2. The student shall have the right to counseling to assess whether his/her aptitudes, interests, and career goals match those of potential work situations under consideration.

3. The student shall take an active role in reviewing and helping to select a position(s) from the opportunities available.

4. The student will have the right to refuse a job situation which he/she feels will likely be a failure experience.

5. The student will be informed of, exposed to, and/or have the opportunity to experience more than one type of job situation.

6. The student will have regular contact with his/her work experience coordinator to provide the coordinator with feedback re: the success or failure of the placement, to aid in making future decisions and to aid in evaluation of the total program.

7. The overall process of the student's participation in the selection of a job experience will point toward the goal of increasing his/her own self awareness i.e. his/her interests, motivations and aptitudes.

APPLICATIONS FOR WORK EXPERIENCE

Suggested procedures to be followed in admitting a student to a work experience program include:

1. The student may file an application with the office of work experience or a recommendation for work experience can be made to that office by a school staff member or parent.

2. An informal interview should be held which would include the student, the work experience team, and, if recommended by a staff member or parent, the person who recommended the student. The purpose of the interview would be to better acquaint the student with the objectives of the program and to determine if he/she meets the minimum requirements of the program and could benefit from it.

3. The work experience team should make its recommendation known to the student and the work experience office. Appropriate avenues of review should

be available to the student. If the student is recommended by the team for the work experience program, an appointment should be made to discuss the program with the parents (or guardian), the student, the work experience coordinator and any other appropriate team member to fully explain the intent and guidelines of the program. (It is recommended that, if at all possible, this conference be held in the home.)

4. If the student and parents (or guardian) agree to the guidelines of the program, a work experience agreement should be signed by all parties involved - the student, the parents (or guardian), the work experience coordinator, a school official, and the employer.

5. Final admission to the program will be contingent on suitable employment being secured for the student.

DURATION OF THE PROGRAM

Participation for one to a maximum of four semesters should be considered for credit purposes. Exceptions to grade level, age or number of semesters for credit shall be made for persons with exceptional needs as determined by the work experience team, with the approval of the school principal and the student's parent or guardian. This exception shall recognize that the needs of the individual can best be met through a work experience program.

HOURS WORKED

Hours to be worked per day should not exceed eight, including the student's school program. It is further recommended that the hours to be worked per normal school week shall not be more than twenty-six beyond the student's school program. Exceptions to these recommended guidelines shall be made only in exceptional circumstances with the student's best interest being the primary concern. The minimum total hours per semester shall be one hundred and sixty, with the above per day - per week guidelines being the underlying criteria in attaining the minimum semester hours.

WAGES

Work experience programs must conform to all applicable State and Federal

minimum wage guidelines.

1. Employers should pay wages at least equivalent to the higher of the State or Federal minimum wage, if they are covered by both State and Federal employment laws.

2. Employment of individuals at subminimum rates is possible if all criteria set by the Equal Rights Division of the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations are met.

3. Volunteer services may qualify for work experience credit, provided the particular volunteer work meets the guidelines and limitations set forth in the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations regulations.

STUDENT-EMPLOYER CONFLICTS

Wherever possible, attempts should be made to resolve student-employer conflicts through the medium of a conference, requested either by the student, employer, school or parents at which the student, employer, work experience coordinator, and by invitation--the parent(s) are present. Other members of the work experience team may also be present when appropriate. Final discretion for continuation in or dismissal from employment rests with the employer. In the event of dismissal, the work experience coordinator, with the advice of the work experience team, is responsible for placement of the student in another work experience setting or other school program.

PARENTS ROLE

The role of parents in work experience programs is described as follows:

a. To become familiar with the purpose, goals and benefits of the work experience program for their son or daughter;
b. To become familiar with the work experience agreement;
c. To visit the job site if possible;
d. To have the opportunity to be on an advisory committee;
e. To provide written consent for participation (Timing of this consent should coincide with the formalization of a specific work experience); and
f. To have the opportunity to refer their child to the work experience program.

STUDENT LOG OF EXPERIENCES

Coordinators should encourage the student to keep a daily, weekly and monthly log of experiences. The log should enable the work experience coordinator, counselor, teacher or other team members to communicate with the student about his successes, failures and the status of the work experience program. Monitoring of the log will help assess the level of occupational development as well as attitudinal changes which take place during the work experience. The type of log prescribed may vary from program to program and may also vary from student to student. It could contain daily, weekly, and monthly listings of events on the job. Some of these entries would show: acquisition of facts and information; acquisition of skills; emergence of a pattern of understanding and concepts; and a traceable development of learning, behavior and attitudes. Hopefully, deficiencies would show up early in log entries through signs of dissatisfaction, unhappiness, disappointment, insecurity, frustration and hostility.

The log may also be useful in relating the work experience to the school program. For example, in English or communications class, improvement in written expression could be noted as the student is encouraged to relate his daily experiences. The log could open avenues for discussion with the coordinator, the counselor and the classroom teacher. If necessary, remedial steps could be instituted by the coordinator to modify or change the student's program in order to progress toward stated goals.

Students with special needs or a strong aversion to writing may require alternatives to the written log. Thus, an oral or taped reporting system might be developed. The type of log should reflect the capability of the student and applicability of the medium to the student.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT OF WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

There should be some type of on-going personal career development program geared toward individual students and related to their success in the world of work and in the community. Focus and scope of counseling and instruction should be tailored to meet individual student needs.

Community agencies and the post-secondary vocational, technical and adult education system may be involved in joint ventures in pre-employment and career

development programs relating to work experience programs.

The work experience coordinator has the primary responsibility for developing this component but should rely on other team members to carry out specific activities such as counseling, social services, psychiatric help, etc.

RELATED INSTRUCTION

It is recommended that work experience programs contain a related instruction component. This component should be under the direction of the work experience coordinator but should be accomplished in close cooperation with other team members. Components of the related instruction program may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Employability Skills - How to get, keep and advance in a job.
2. Personal appearance and hygiene
3. Relationship of work to study
4. General economics

EVALUATION

Evaluation should take place at regular intervals, conducted by the work experience coordinator and employer with assistance from the work experience team as needed. An additional evaluation should take place at the end of the school year, and should be a joint endeavor of school, parent, employer, student and others who might have a bearing on the outcome.

FOLLOW-UP

Students in work experience programs should be followed-up at regular intervals to determine the benefits of the program over the long run. Follow-up information should be collected and disseminated by the work experience office.

RELATIONSHIP OF WORK EXPERIENCE TO VOCATIONAL COOP EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Elements of the vocational Coop program which may be appropriate to a work experience program, include aspects of instruction, coordination and administration. Appropriate similarities are described below.

Instruction: Related instruction should be available. This includes covering proper attitudes, and general employment skills and needs of beginning workers. Participation, where possible, in related vocational or general education courses is recommended. Adequate guidance, counseling and school social services peculiar to the needs of participants should also be available.

Coordination: A qualified work experience coordinator must have sufficient time provided to serve as a liaison between the student, employer, parents and school. The coordinator should establish and utilize an advisory committee and use work experience agreements signed by the student, employer, parents and school. Interpretation of the program to concerned "publics" and follow-up are also functions of the work experience coordinator.

Administration: One office in the local district should be responsible for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all work programs for which school credit is granted. Plans for all work experience agreements should be on file in this office. It is suggested that this office for administrative purposes be that of the LVEC when available in the school district.*

*This does not mean the LVEC is the work experience coordinator, but only that the administrative functions and centralization of files and reports are under his/her control.

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